

EXHIBIT A



Flexibility Keys Productive Staff, No Punching In At The Best NPOs

Mark Hrywna | News | April 2, 2020

As president and CEO of [Big Brother Big Sisters \(BBBS\) of the Midlands](#), Nichole Turgeon conducts exit interviews with employees when they leave the organization. But she also does a "stay interview" with each of her approximately 33 staff.

Feedback from employees is consistent: if they were to leave, they would most miss their co-workers, the families and volunteers they serve, and their flexible schedules.

BBBS of the Midlands ranked No. 3 overall, and No. 2 among small organizations, in *The NonProfit Times'* 2020 Best Nonprofits To Work For study. The Omaha, Neb.-based affiliate took a couple of years off from participating after making the top 50 several years in a row.

The [National Older Worker Career Center \(NOWCC\)](#) ranked No. 1 overall and No. 1 among small organizations. The Arlington, Va.-based nonprofit "provides government agencies experienced workers using cost-effective, flexible, innovative and contemporary staffing options. NOWCC is a regular among the 50 Best Nonprofits To Work For, securing the top overall ranking for the second consecutive year, in addition to 2014 and 2015.

Rank ▲	Nonprofit	U.S Employees
1	National Older Worker Career Center	28
2	DoSomething.org	55
3	Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands	33
4	United Way of Southwest Michigan	21
5	OSU Foundation	154
6	Team Rubicon	127
7	Starr Commonwealth	50
8	DonorsChoose	152
9	Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment	84
10	Promise Resource Network	22
11	The Lord's Place	122
12	ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer	29
13	Wounded Warrior Project	682
14	Better Business Bureau serving the Heart of Texas	109
15	USTA Mid-Atlantic Section	31
16	Legal Aid Society of DC	74
17	American Arbitration Association	586
18	The Florida Center for Early Childhood	122

The top 50 organizations are ranked and also broken down by size. Small organizations are those that have between 15 and 49 employees; medium organizations are those with 50 to 249 employees; and large organizations have 250 or more employees.

The top 10 key drivers identified in the *Best Nonprofits To Work For* report were:

- I feel I am valued in this organization
- I have confidence in the leadership of this organization
- Most days, I feel I have made progress at work
- I like the type of work that I do

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- Most days, I feel I have made progress at work
- I like the type of work that I do
- At this organization, employees have fun at work
- I can trust what this organization tells me
- Overall, I'm satisfied with this organization's benefits package
- There is room for me to advance at this organization
- The leaders of this organization care about their employees' well being
- I like the people I work with at this organization

To determine the *Best NonProfits To Work For*, *The NonProfit Times* contracted with Harrisburg, Pa.-based [Best Companies Group](#) (BCG) to [survey employees, manager and outside vendors of participating organizations](#) on questions and statements across eight categories. Responses are then compiled into an Employee Benchmark Report (EBR), which breaks out the percentage of positive responses ("agree somewhat" and "agree strongly") for those organizations that were the *Best Nonprofits* and those that did not make the cut, as well as by category of small, medium and large organizations.

Best Nonprofits are those that scored exceptionally high on average in these categories compared to those organizations that did not make the list:

- Leadership and planning, 90 percent versus 75 percent;
- Culture and communications, 89 percent/75 percent;
- Role satisfaction, 92 percent/83 percent;
- Work environment, 91 percent/83 percent;
- Relationship with supervisor, 92 percent/87 percent;
- Training, development and resources, 85 percent/72 percent;
- Pay and benefits, 90 percent/76 percent; and,
- Overall engagement, 93 percent/83 percent.

One of the most consistent areas where *Best Nonprofits* outdid their counterparts was in allowing employees additional paid time off (PTO) for community services. Overall, 70 percent of *Best Nonprofits* had such a policy compared with 41 percent among organizations not on the list. That spread was consistent among different sized organizations:

- Small, 82 percent versus 57 percent;
- Medium, 56 percent versus 35 percent; and,
- Large, 100 percent versus 40 percent.

BBBS formalized PTO for employees to volunteer, both individually and/or as a group. Many choose to volunteer as Big Brothers or Big Sisters, Turgeon said, and they get one hour paid of mentoring per pay period every two weeks. They also participate in group volunteer activities, such as a monthly park cleanup.

"We've done adopt-a-park and other things in the community. It's a great opportunity to show we're a partner in the community," she said. "It helps our employees learn about the community and it's great team building to do volunteer work as a group, outside of what they might do individually here," Turgeon said.

To mark its 25th anniversary in September, the [Gulf Coast Community Foundation](#) (GCCF) kicked off a volunteer program, identifying opportunities that were motivating to staff members.

The goal is that the entire team gets to spend 25 hours paid personal volunteer time with organizations that mean the most to them, according to Veronica Thames, senior vice president for administration and chief operating officer. "It's been a remarkable level of engagement and great feedback from organizations," she said.

The Venice, Fla.-based foundation ranked No. 22 overall and No. 8 among small organizations. Most of the 21 employees have reached the 25-hour mark with a few still expected to eclipse it this year. "We're not going to draw the line if anyone is particularly interested in any particular project," Thames said.

Staffing levels are adequate to provide quality products/services had the widest margin of any specific statement, with an average 82 percent positive response among *Best Nonprofits* compared to just 57 percent among charities that did not make the cut.

Other questions where *Best Nonprofits* distinguished themselves from other employers were:

- I'm satisfied with the tuition reimbursement benefits, 77 percent to 45 percent (+28 percent)
- The organization provided as much initial training as I needed, 88 percent to 64 percent (+24 percent)
- Staffing levels are adequate to provide quality products/services, 82 percent versus 57 percent (+25 percent)
- I plan to continue my career with this organization for at least two years, 88 percent versus 65 percent (+22 percent)
- There is room to grow at this organization, 72 percent versus 50 percent (+22 percent).

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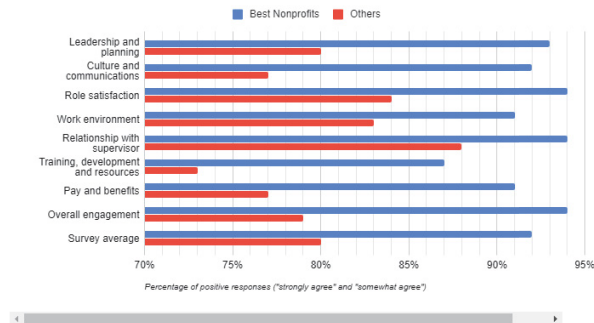
- There is room to grow at this organization, 72 percent versus 50 percent (+22 percent).

BCG also compiles an Employer Benchmark Summary, presenting average responses to 85 questions and statements about various benefits offerings by the nonprofit.

Four out of five *Best Nonprofits* offered fully or partially paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child compared with barely half of nonprofits that did not make that list. The gap among large organizations was even wider, at 83 percent to 40 percent, and similar across medium organizations, 70 percent versus 50 percent.

Best Nonprofits To Work For 2020

Employee Benchmark Report



Participants in the *Best Nonprofits To Work For* often use the survey results to examine their own organizations — whether they make the final cut or not.

For instance, BBBS of the Midlands used the Employee Benchmark Summary to assess the number of participating organizations that had paid sabbaticals. That prompted further discussion of how it could develop its own policy, according to Turgeon.

Survey results also can uncover the need to improve communications and transparency. BBBS received feedback from staff comments that more people were needed. That prompted a staffing analysis, including benchmarking its staffing and workloads against other BBBS agencies, which was presented to staff and later a discussion about current and future staffing.

When people think about culture and employee engagement, they often jump to the things that are costly, such as an elaborate staff retreat or perks found at a Silicon Valley tech company, Turgeon said. “While all that would be great, there are so many things you can do,” she said. “Employees want to know they’re cared about and their opinion matters. I actually love having those conversations, it can be tough to find the time but it’s a great opportunity to get feedback directly from employees,” she said.

BBBS of the Midlands has grown since Turgeon joined 15 years ago. She moved up internally to become development director and nine years ago was appointed chief executive. “It’s harder to keep the finger on the pulse of employees,” as the organization has grown. “Sit-downs have been helpful,” she said, adding that she enjoys getting positive feedback about other co-workers or supervisors through the “stay” interviews.

Growing within the organization has been helpful, avoiding a learning curve about the culture. “Because I had been an employee, I recognized things that we could do to improve, especially around employee engagement,” Turgeon said. “It’s really easy in our sector for there to be a divide between program/direct service and fundraisers and the administrative people. It’s something I saw happening at our organization way back when and it’s something I focused on,” she said.



At the [College Foundation of the University of Virginia \(UVA\)](#), there was a similar divide — only it was literally a physical one. The previous layout of the Charlottesville, Va., office had one quad that was very small and the rest of it was “a bit of a maze,” according to Erin Dinger, SHRM-SCP, senior director of finance and human resources. No one wanted to sit in the kitchen because it was located in the middle of the offices. “It was a

point of contention. No one wanted to sit there and be distracted, with smells lingering,” she said.

So the foundation — which ranked No. 35 overall and No. 16 among small organizations — went about renovating its space for the first time since 2007. The goal was to create a place to gather, socialize, network and “create this opportunity for innovation,” said Dinger, who previously had a corporate background from Marriott.

“It was a deliberate process in planning our renovation,” Dinger said. The foundation’s president, Eugene Schutt, Jr., wanted to hear from every department about what they wanted to see, what they’re currently not enjoying about the office, and things they could see. “Because we’d been in the space so long everyone already knew exactly what they wanted to see,” Dinger said.

Renovations have allowed for a “Great Room,” a social area and kitchen which is often used for a variety of group or team-building activities. Some days, movies are screened

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what they wanted to see," Dinger said.

Renovations have allowed for a "Great Room," a social area and kitchen which is often used for a variety of group or team-building activities. Some days, movies are screened during lunch, other times it's a viewing party for sporting events like the World Cup, March Madness or UVA teams. Children are welcome in the office during office hours so that's where they might take in a movie or get set up on a computer.

Schutt has made it a goal to sit there and have lunch as often as possible. It sparks opportunities for employees to have conversations with the president, or with anyone at any time, Dinger said. "It's better and more efficient to have employees more engaged."

Prior to renovations, the president had a bell outside of his office, which would be rung to celebrate securing a big gift or donor agreement. It's now become a metaphorical bell and evolved into an email newsletter that includes all staff, not just fundraisers.

The bi-weekly "Ring the Bell" email is partly a communications tool to share information and bring together staff in fundraising and administration. "It's all about sharing information, what are we doing with the annual fund, email solicitations," Dinger said.

A common thread through the 50 organizations is being flexible when it comes to employee schedules.

Offering flexible hours or a compressed work week as a standard, year-round practice, was especially popular among *Best Nonprofits*. On average, 84 percent of Best Nonprofits offered the benefit versus 69 percent of organizations that did not make the cut. That was the case across the board, with large organizations at an average 83 percent (versus 60 percent) and medium organizations at 74 percent (compared with 60 percent).

In a similar vein, offering telecommuting as a standard practice to employees was far more common among *Best Nonprofits*. Overall, 84 percent of *Best Nonprofits* offered it compared with 69 percent overall, and each category eclipsed the 80-percent mark.

Each of the employees at Newton, Mass.-based [18Doors](#) gets a laptop. "We have a culture, by and large, that's supportive of one another," said CEO Jodi Bromberg said. "The first overarching thing is, hiring kind, smart and capable people, and it begins there, with emphasis on the kind," she said.

"At the same time, we trust our staff to get their work done in ways that work for them," she said. "That's attractive for people in this particular day and age."

It's important for all employees to have the same experience, whether they are one of the 10 staff based in the national office or among the eight who work remotely. 18Doors recently hired a director of professional development who's based in Toronto. Bromberg stressed hiring the best people, regardless of whether they're located in the Boston region.

"It means just simply, we trust people to figure out what they need to do to get the job done and do it. At the same time, we set goals, measure against them, and we're not afraid to make changes if we need to," Bromberg said.

The organization last made the *Best Nonprofits To Work For* in 2017 when it went by the name Interfaith Family (it rebranded earlier this year). 18Doors, which ranked 47th overall and 17th among small nonprofits, focuses on supporting interfaith families, where one parent or person is Jewish and the other is of another faith, in the exploration of Jewish life.

At monthly staff meetings, national office employees would congregate in a conference room where a webcam would connect to a large television screen. It was not a great experience for people outside of the Boston office, Bromberg said, as there would be cross talk and they might only see the tops of people's heads. A small but important change was everyone bringing their laptop.

Within the last year, 18Doors started a "virtual coffee break" to include staff outside of headquarters. "Everyone hops on Zoom for 15 to 20 minutes just to say hi and talk about what's going on with them," Bromberg said. "That's been successful and people enjoy it. They feel like they're a part of something, particularly if one or two people are in a location," she said, such as three staff located in Philadelphia but in different parts of the city and suburbs. "It's how we keep everyone connected to one another."

Employees in the national office might congregate at the snack bar, where jars are filled with candy or other treats, so "that's where people hang out. Obviously, for those employees outside of Boston, it's a little harder," Bromberg said.

"Knowing everyone plays a role in developing organizational culture, you get the benefits of getting people's ideas," Bromberg said.

She and the chief operating officer share an administrative assistant, who's been with the organization for a few years. About three years ago, she approached them with the idea to start a staff newsletter. "Now on a weekly basis, there's a staff newsletter that everyone provides input to; it's just a fun way of disseminating information," she said.

Bromberg stressed listening to staff and trying to meet them where they are, recalling the story of one new mom who was nursing and anxious about leaving her infant for the first time to attend a staff retreat. 18Doors found a company that allowed the

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Bromberg stressed listening to staff and trying to meet them where they are, recalling the story of one new mom who was nursing and anxious about leaving her infant for the first time to attend a staff retreat. 18Doors found a company that allowed the employee to pump breast milk while she was gone and have it shipped home.

"It wasn't a huge cost for us but doing things like that, in the scheme of a \$3-million organization, helps make people's lives better and easier," Bromberg said. It's all part of "ensuring the culture we're trying to create and the values of the type of organization we want to be flow through to every staff person, regardless of where they're located on a day-to-day basis." *NPT*



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